Emory University: Where Courageous Inquiry Leads
James W. Wagner
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Good evening, and welcome to all of you. I can't tell you how glad I am that you're here, because the hope – really the expectation – of my colleagues and myself in organizing this retreat is that all of us will look back ten or fifteen years from now and see this as a historic period. Several times in Emory's history our predecessors have organized their planning by a common vision. We are in such a time now.

It's been said that history teaches that change is constant, though not necessarily smooth. Emory's history in particular is one of great change, not so much by smooth transition, as by moments of bold transformation. Since change will occur, whether we like it or not, our great opportunity is to guide and shape that change.

We can take encouragement from Emory's past in thinking about what our future could be. Emory has undergone many prior periods of transformation, beginning with its birth. The Georgia Methodists who founded Emory College in 1836 were the same ones who, two years earlier, had established the Manual Labor School. That private academy succeeded in enrolling students but couldn't make a go of it financially. So the trustees led forward with courage. They enlarged their vision, reinvented their mission, and created something greater—a college, whose founding was a rebirth, an elevation of mission to a new and higher plane.

And then think what it meant to Atlanta and the South for the trustees of Emory College in 1915 to decide that their little school should become part of a new university forty miles away. That was an important moment in the history of Atlanta, the history of Methodist education, and the history of Emory itself. Think of what has grown up since

that daring decision. The university planted on Asa Candler's acres in Druid Hills has become Georgia's third-largest private employer and the center of the largest health-care system in the state. It is part of the nucleus of what has become "the public health capital of the world." It is one of the largest feeder schools for the Peace Corps, the alma mater for women and men who have transformed the education of nurses in America, the place where the world's leading treatment for HIV/AIDS was invented. Candler's acres house the world's largest Methodist seminary, one of the top ten executive MBA programs in the world, and a law school whose programs in public-interest law have set the standard. It's easy to say that Emory's trustees in 1915 could not have imagined what would happen in ninety years. But I think they did. They lacked the details, but they had the vision and the daring.

And then think of 1979, when the University received the munificent Woodruff gift. That year was certainly transformational. But it wasn't merely a monetary windfall that made 1979 significant. What mattered was the vision of Emory's people, once again rising to the opportunity for courageous leadership. Did you know that until 1979, Emory University had never hosted a major academic conference? Can you imagine? But that year, Emory celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of our Phi Beta Kappa chapter by hosting a conference on Intellect and Imagination. And the most eminent scholars showed up.

Recall that in 1979, Emory had no programs in creative writing, dance, or visual arts, no Schwartz Center, no Dobbs University Center, no Carlos Museum, no Mathematics and Science Center, no Woodruff P.E. Center, no Rollins Research Center, no Whitehead Building, no Winship Cancer Institute – few of the means by which Emory students and faculty now stretch their imaginations at the same time they deepen their

intellectual understanding and service to the world. The year 1979 opened a chance for Emory to grow into itself, to reach for maturity, to announce that this university would live up to its promise and become one of the best universities in the world.

And now we come to another period whose conditions are ripe for transformation. Our work of the past two years has given us a vision of what Emory will dare to be: "A destination university internationally recognized as an inquiry-driven, ethically engaged, and diverse community, whose members work collaboratively for positive transformation in the world through courageous leadership in teaching, research, scholarship, health care, and social action." If I were to sum up this vision succinctly, I would say Emory should be a place where courageous inquiry leads. Let me say that again: Emory should be both a destination <u>to which</u> courageous inquiry leads the best people, and a university <u>whose</u> courageous inquiry leads in making the world better.

II

But what sort of world will require our courageous inquiry? It's commonplace to hear American universities described as the envy of the world. American higher education is a source of our nation's pride and strength, making the United States the educators of tomorrow's leaders and a destination for the rest of the world. But it has not always been that way, and it may not last forever.

In fact, here is some sobering evidence that America is in danger of losing its position as the world's greatest producer and exporter of brainpower. In the creation of new knowledge through research in science and engineering, Western Europe surpassed the United States in 1994 and continues to pull away, while China, Japan, and Korea are

quickly catching up. Canada and Western Europe now invest in research and development at a much higher rate than the United States. Federal investment in the physical sciences as a percentage of GDP is half what it was thirty years ago. Many of you have heard me speak about the difficulties that foreign students encounter as they try to pursue graduate studies in this country, but even the number of American students attending U.S. graduate institutions has fallen since 1999. Just last month, the CEO of Intel commented that his company could continue to flourish without hiring another American scientist or engineer, because the talent lies in India, China, and Europe. That, friends, is a challenge for America that requires courageous inquiry and leadership.

Challenges face us in health care as well. Compared to other industrialized nations, America spends more on health to accomplish less. As a percentage of GDP, Japan spends half what we do on health, and Western Europe spends about two-thirds. Yet a person born in the United States has a life-expectancy several years shorter than one born in France, and five years shorter than one born in Japan. In the rate of infant mortality, the U.S. ranks 36th. This is a challenge that calls for courageous inquiry and leadership.

Any university that wants to fulfill its mission of research, education, and service faces steep challenges in a rapidly changing world. Thomas Friedman has observed that the world is flat—the playing field on which businesses and universities around the world compete is level, because technology has made it so. The high tech and health advances of tomorrow can happen in Mumbai as easily as in Atlanta. But for those elements of the world's population without access to technology, the flattening of the world means the likelihood of falling off the edge, as the disparity between haves and have-nots increases.

The world, then, is one that calls for institutions like Emory, where courageous inquiry can lead others not just toward new technological heights but also toward the moral high ground. But the world in which Emory will find itself includes not only challenges but unique opportunities as well. So let me speak briefly of some of those.

According to one estimate, by the year 2015, retirements, growth of the faculty, and replacement of faculty members who move on will mean that between 50 and 77 percent of the faculty will have arrived since 2005. Let me say that again: half to three-quarters of Emory faculty in the year 2015 are not currently at Emory. To quote the comic strip character Pogo, we may be facing "insurmountable opportunity."

Among our blessings is our city. Atlanta is not only the cradle of the American Civil Rights movement of the twentieth century but also the destination for one of the most diverse populations in the country. Just a few miles from our campus, Lakeside High School needs ten programs to teach English as a second language, because so many languages are spoken there. Our city has learned something about managing transition and conflict, race and difference, and that presents an opportunity to explore where courageous inquiry leads.

Atlanta is also home to other top educational institutions. Georgia Tech, for instance, has at least six programs ranked in the top four nationwide, including our joint doctoral program in biomedical engineering. If you combined the federal research dollars flowing to Georgia Tech and to Emory, the total would be the twelfth highest for all research universities in the country. Even more interesting, if you drew a line between Baltimore and San Diego, you would find that no other university south of that line would come close to the research level of Georgia Tech and Emory combined—not

Duke, not Vanderbilt, not the University in Florida, not the University of Texas. The potential for further partnerships with Georgia Tech is an opportunity to expand the horizons of courageous inquiry.

Other ways in which Emory reaches and must continue to reach into the world are unique and startling. Our partnerships range from those with Atlanta through our Office of University and Community Partnerships, to our unprecedented collaboration in Tibetan Buddhist Studies with the Dalai Lama's great monastic university in India, to society-changing programs in health care in the Republic of Georgia, to cooperative teaching and internships in journalism and museum management in South Africa.

Emory's neighbors include the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the national headquarters of the American Cancer Society, as well as CARE and Emory's own Carter Center. Among us, we have partnerships around the globe, especially in developing countries, where small investments pay huge returns in humanitarian relief, democratic strength, and the healing of disease, malnutrition, and poverty. Emory is poised to lead the higher education community into whole new areas where the deepest yearning of our hearts and the highest aspirations of our minds can meet the greatest needs of the world.

III.

Ladies and gentlemen, our present circumstances make it possible once again to catalyze another great period of transformation for Emory. As in 1836, the nation and the world have enormous needs for the best ideas and the greatest wisdom we can summon. As in 1915, a new constellation of institutions has converged in Atlanta, and the imagination of courageous leadership is stirring. As in 1979, the hearts and minds of

Emory's people are poised to direct their manifold gifts into shaping a world in which excellence and goodness find a common home in one great institution. And for the first time since then, Emory has challenged itself to develop a collective strategy based upon a single over-arching vision. Emory has the opportunity to build on our legacy of educating heart and mind for good of the highest order. Over the next decade, Emory University will achieve distinction as a place where engaged scholars come together in a strong and vital community to confront the human condition and explore 21st-century frontiers in science, health care, and technology. We can foster the great personal good of our community's members while also seeking solutions that serve the public good of our neighbors and the world. And we can do so in a way that helps to restore and preserve America's leadership in higher education. We dare not waste this moment; we must not let this opportunity pass unclaimed.

You would not be here tonight if you did not agree that Emory has this potential. But it's fair to ask, how can greatness be measured? What exactly makes for a great university, and what will a great university in the future look like? More specifically, what will Emory look like when it becomes more fully Emory, when it can be valued for what it is, not just for the ways in which it is similar to other great universities?

I think greatness comes down to three things: people, resources, and convergence. To be great, a university must have great people supported by great resources in a place that compels the powerful convergence of intellect, imagination, and energy. So let me spell out some of the ways I think Emory will build on its greatness in the next decade. Each of these areas will require investment, but each will redound to Emory's enduring benefit with concrete and widely influential results.

Faculty

First, we must invest in the best faculty in order to have the best faculty. We will continue raising our expectations for excellence in teaching, research, and service by insisting that each department, each school, revisit its own promotion and tenure standards regularly. We will hire scholars and teachers at the top of their game, in the middle of their careers, and considered by their peers to be in the top ten percent of their field. We will hire the best young faculty attracted at the start of their careers by what is happening at Emory. We will enhance staff support, will increase the number of endowed chairs, will make available to departments funding for special opportunities. And we will better reward the stars already at Emory, to keep them here.

When we have ensured in these ways that Emory is more fully a career destination, here is what we can expect to see in 2015:

- research activity will have increased from $350 million this year to $735 million, moving Emory from 39th to 20th after adjusting for inflation and relative advances of our peers;
- the number of faculty elected to national academies will have increased from 18 to 50, moving Emory from 56th to 21st;
- the number of national faculty awards, such as Guggenheim Fellowships and the National Humanities Medal, will have risen from 14 a year to 40 a year, a jump from 43rd to 6th;
- the number of doctoral students attracted by our faculty will double, moving Emory from 90th to 37th; and, more important, the number of new Ph.D.'s being

placed in the top jobs in their fields will increase Emory's overall reputation by putting Emory alumni in positions of academic leadership for the next generation;

- five of our graduate programs must be ranked in the top five, and ten others will be ranked in the top twenty;
- in health care, 31 percent of our referrals will come from outside the Atlanta area, compared to 21 percent today;
- patient satisfaction in Emory Healthcare entities will have moved from their current rankings in the third to tenth deciles to the first decile;
- and for our staff, Emory of 2015 could justifiably be ranked among the 100 best nonprofit corporations in which to work.

For many, attention to these sorts of statistics and rankings are a primary focus. But for Emory, such changes will be simply the byproduct of doing things right.

Destination for Students

And what about our students?

Emory College will lead in undergraduate education, making Emory a first choice for high school seniors. We are setting new records annually for numbers of applications and selectivity. But we can do better. When we go head-to-head against our peers in recruiting students who apply to them as well as to Emory, the results are mixed. Here are some schools we typically win against: Tulane, Florida, Boston, George Washington, Furman, William and Mary, Tufts, and Miami. Here are some we break even against: Washington University, Vanderbilt, Georgia Tech, Michigan, Wake Forest, Chicago, Johns Hopkins, Southern Cal, and Berkeley. Not a mediocre set of schools by any means.

But here are the ones we typically lose to: the Ivies, Duke, Northwestern, Georgetown, Stanford, UNC, Rice, and Notre Dame.

What is it that leads 80 percent of students admitted to Harvard to enroll there, compared to only 29 percent at Emory? It's not the great teaching – Emory's faculty can hold their own with any Ivy League faculty when it comes to teaching. It's not the weather, I guarantee that. It's not the opportunity to walk five minutes from a pre-med class to the hospital, which you can do at Emory but not at Harvard. I would dare say that it's not even the undergraduate experience of campus life, although Cambridge offers attractions missing from Emory Village. But add everything together at Harvard, or Northwestern, or Stanford, or Duke, and you have a name recognized worldwide, whose brand is not only a long history of accomplishment but also a promise of continuing value. We must make the Emory story more substantive and better known and the Emory promise preeminently attractive, so that the Emory brand becomes a first choice of high school graduates.

How will we do that over the next ten years? One way is through our admissions office. It's already one of the best tactical admissions office around. We will make it the best strategic office as well. We will turn from passive admission to active recruiting. We will create more effective financial aid for lower- and middle-income students of high caliber through increased endowment for scholarships.

When we make Emory a destination for students, here is what we can expect:

- the number of applicants we accept for admission will have continued to drop, from 43 percent two years ago, to 36 percent this year, on down to 25 percent in

2015; moreover the number accepting our offer will rise from 29 percent to 40 percent.

- the average SAT score for our entering freshmen will have risen from 25th among our peers to 15th;
- the number of National Merit Scholars enrolling each year will have doubled from 59 this year, placing us 34th, to 118, placing us 18th (Harvard, by the way, enrolled 312 of the 8200 Merit scholars in fall 2004);
- the percentage of students who come from other nations will have jumped from 3.8 percent to 10 percent;
- we will have doubled the number of Emory students who are finalists for the major national scholarships such as Rhodes, Marshall, Fulbright, and National Science Foundation scholarships;
- the graduation rate for students completing their undergraduate degrees within five years will have risen to 90 percent;
- and we will have increased the number of graduates who go on to win Pulitzer Prizes, enter public service at high levels, lead arts organizations, and get on track for corporate and healthcare leadership.

Again, these changes and their related rankings are not intrinsically motivating but will be the result of doing things right.

Philanthropic Investment

Finally, if we are to make Emory a destination for the best faculty, students, and staff, we must also attract adequate resources to support them. There is no secret about our

intention to launch a major comprehensive campaign in the fall. Our strategic aspirations demand it. Johnnie Ray will speak about the campaign later in the retreat, but I can tell you that the potential is here to build, without exaggeration, the best fund-raising and university relations team in the country. The result of this effort will be not only a major infusion of funds into our endowment – something more than a billion dollars – but also the nurturing of a culture of philanthropy. We will invest a lot of money and energy and imagination into the campaign. And here are the results we can expect by 2015:

- annual giving, which totaled $110 million last year, the 39th-highest among colleges and universities nationally, will have climbed to $285 million, putting Emory twelfth;
- the percentage of alumni giving back to their alma mater will have jumped from 25 percent to greater than 35 percent. (By comparison, Princeton, the perennial leader in this category, last year received gifts from 61 percent of its alumni.)
- the enthusiasm for annual giving by our trustees and members of our various deans' councils will increase dramatically. You, the trustees, must determine among yourselves what level of giving that should be.

What leads 61 percent of Princeton alumni to give to their alma mater every year? What leads many of you to give to Emory? I believe it is the experience and the conviction that your personal story is inextricably and importantly bound up in the story of your university, and the expectation that the promise that drew you to the university not only has been fulfilled but will continue being fulfilled in years to come. We want our students to leave Emory knowing that their university's "legacy of heart and mind" is their personal legacy as well, and one over which they must exercise wise stewardship.

IV.

In closing, over the next day and a half, my colleagues and I intend to spread before you Emory's strategic plan. It is a map that shows how we intend to achieve our vision. As in any map, there are multiple routes to where we want to go. Some of them will require us to carve our path out of unclaimed territory along the way. Some of our routes will require risk, though we will manage the journey with enough experience and smarts to minimize the dangers. Some of our ways into the future will exhilarate us by their vistas as much as they challenge us by unexpected obstacles. What we can be certain of is that there is no "yellow brick road" to the Land of Oz, no path for us merely to stroll along. But neither is our goal as empty, in the end, as the promise of that Wizard.

On the other hand, if you'll permit me to extend the reference, getting to the Emory that it is called to be, the Emory of tomorrow, will take courage, heart, and brains. I can vouch for the collective power of the gray matter assembled in this room. I can also guarantee that there is plenty of heart and courage here to carry out our plan, to fine-tune it as we go, and even to take new bearings along the way. It will be a great and an awesome journey. And it will take all of us in this room—and a lot of others besides—to see it through to the end.

And what will be your own role in this enterprise? I would boil it down to four things: first, you must ask critical questions, offer advice and guidance out of the wisdom of your experience; second, you must help identify the means to make it all happen; third, you must roll up your sleeves and work alongside other alumni, friends, and constituencies; and finally, you must have fun and remind us to have fun also. From our

campus gate, we are about to undertake work that will transform not only our campus but also our community, work that will greatly and positively affect our region, and, indeed, work that will build for our children's children a better world. There is no more important or more enjoyable journey than the one we are about to embark on. This is Emory's journey: to become a destination university, a place where courageous inquiry leads.

Enjoy dinner and conversation together, rest well tonight, and let's get to work tomorrow. Thank you.

As of 5/31/05